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EDUCATION ONTARIO

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Robarts School: a profile

by Mark Kearney

After a visit to the Robarts School for the Deaf in London, some images linger:

- the young children in the library with the special radio units around their necks to allow them to listen to specific sounds, even if they only hear them as whispers or buzzes;
- the trophy case near the school's main entrance containing awards demonstrating the school's success in a variety of sports in competition with all schools throughout the region and the province;
- the teacher who talks to a hearing visitor but still continues using the sign language equivalent to what she's saying;
- the young children who sign and speak "thank you" as they receive letters written by their fellow classmates from the young boy who is this week's designated mail deliverer;
- the row of different size trees growing on the property, planted by each graduating class of past years;
- the four older children in an oral class who proudly recite poems or short books they have written and then discuss writing techniques with a reporter who is sitting in on the class; and
- a learning disabled high school student named Chris who speaks slowly but has an important message about how

the school's demonstration program has helped his reading skills. "I've improved from last year a lot. My other school didn't have the advantages of this one."



Designated mailman Jason Brown delivers letters to his fellow classmates

Although there are so many things that make the Robarts School seem just like any other you would find in Ontario, many different qualities make it special. A visit to the school only gives a taste of the kind of life that goes on there; one would need to spend several weeks at Robarts to fully appreciate the breadth of programs offered and what they mean to students, staff, and parents.

For example, the Ministry of Education is spending \$539,444 over three years to

establish a Centre for Special Education Technology at the school. Beginning in April the centre will, among other things, demonstrate and promote the appropriate classroom use of computer technology in special education, evaluate the effects of computer technology on special populations, and establish an information exchange across Ontario.

"We've got a program that's good here," says Roger Miller, the school's superintendent. "It works reasonably well." Then he corrects himself. "Reasonably well? I think we're doing tremendously well."

Mr. Miller bristles at comments made in the past year by critics who have said schools like Robarts aren't doing a good job teaching reading skills to deaf students. They claim that only a few students who graduate from provincial schools such as Robarts have better than grade four reading ability.

favorably with North American averages, he says.

He speaks proudly of the 12 of 17 recent graduates who have been accepted by Gallaudet College in the U.S. and the more than 95 per cent of co-operative education students who continue to work after leaving school.

Nevertheless, Mr. Miller thinks the school can do better, and he and the staff have set a goal for 1993 to have 96 per cent of the graduates with a grade four or



Premier David Peterson and Education Minister Chris Ward get a first hand look at how technology is helping students at Robarts School.

better level of reading and 56 per cent above grade 7 level.

"Language development among the students has improved over the years. With the right approach we can meet that goal!"

There seems to be a strong emphasis on reading and writing at the school. The library is stocked with a wide variety of books and other visual materials, and it is in the process of having its catalogues computerized. Older students in residence practise their speaking skills by reading and signing bedtime stories to the younger children.

During the day, students attend classes in small groups to allow for more individualized attention. Each student also spends



Christine Dyck reads from her latest book with the help of teacher John Barry

Mr. Miller provides statistics from the past four years that show almost 85 per cent of their graduates read better than grade four and close to a third are better than grade 7 level. This compares very

Minister establishes teacher education council

An Ontario Council for Teacher Education, has been established to advise the Ministers of Education and Colleges and Universities on all aspects of teacher education, says Education Minister Chris Ward.

In addition, all matters relating to teacher education will become the responsibility of the Ministry of Education in a new branch to be called the Centre for Teacher Education, he announced. Currently, teacher education is a shared responsibility with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

Formation of the Council "will serve an essential role in shaping a quality teacher education process to benefit both teachers and students," Mr. Ward said.

The Council will consist of 16 members representing four major stakeholders in teacher education — universities, teachers, school boards and government — and will be in place by the beginning of the new school year.

Executive Director of the Council will be Frank Clifford, who served as Chairman of the Teacher Education Review Steering Committee. He has had 35 years experience as an educator, including 10 years in teacher education.

Mr. Ward said he intends to direct the Council to advise on such recommendations as:

- the development of mechanisms for

assisting in the on-going, self-directed professional development of teachers; and

- the creation of an induction period for new teachers, similar to an apprenticeship term, by 1995;
- the inclusion of "teacher aptitude" among new factors in the assessment of applicants for entry to the faculties of education;
- the development of mechanisms for ensuring that teacher education is responsive to emerging social, economic and demographic changes.

"In addition," Mr. Ward said, "the Council will recommend means of responding to the need for teachers in specific, high-demand subjects, such as French-language programs, mathematics, science and technological studies at the secondary level."

The minister also outlined a series of short- and long-term measures to counter the possibility of a teacher shortage. These include helping boards hire some of the 5,000 teaching graduates since 1984 who have not pursued teaching careers, working with the Minister of Colleges and Universities to ensure significant enrolment increases in the faculties of education, assisting boards to access the increasing number of out-of-province teachers approved to teach in Ontario and exploring the possibility of using more retired teachers.

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Robarts

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time each day with a teacher in an individual speech and listening tutorial.

There are 105 hearing-impaired students on campus, with just over half who reside there during the week. The students come from throughout southwestern Ontario and each has a different level of hearing loss. The school offers what is referred to as total communication — a combination of oral speech and sign language.

That is why staff will always sign as they're speaking, even to someone who can hear what they're saying, to ensure that anyone who might be nearby will understand what is being communicated.



Marilyn Worden coaches Matthew Dans through his daily speech and listening tutorial

In oral classes, where students write and recite their own poetry and stories, signing usually only happens when someone gets stuck on a particular word or phrase.

The Ministry has been conducting an internal review of its educational programs for hearing-impaired students. An external, independent review will be conducted later this year as a way of improving deaf education in the province.

Another significant change in the school's 15-year history happened in 1987 when it was re-designated as a centre for Communication Exceptionalities and a program for students with learning disabilities (usually language skills) was established.

Pat Doig, the program director of this demonstration school, sees the program as a "bridge, not a harbor" for students who aren't currently succeeding in regular classes. The average length of stay for these students is two years, and they concentrate on writing, reading, speaking and social skills.

However, the long range goal is for the

students to return to their local board and reintegrate into regular classes, she says.

Greg, one of the students in the program, says "it really helps me a lot because when you're here you have to learn to solve your problems. When you're living here you have to get along with the other students, you can't just go home at the end of the day and forget about it. It's also good that the classes are more structured."

The 25 students in the demonstration program take some classes with the deaf students and participate together in sports, dances and other school events. Ms. Doig says it gives both groups a better understanding of each other.

There's also another benefit to combining the students. Because the older boys in the demonstration program usually want to get to know the hearing impaired girls at the school and vice versa, there is a built-in incentive to practise the skills they're both trying to learn.

The boys practise their writing when they send notes to the girls, and the girls practise speaking because they want to talk to the boys and get to know them better. Some things about high school students never change no matter where it is they're learning.

The school uses resources from throughout southwestern Ontario and second teachers and professionals from local school boards, the University of Western Ontario, and Fanshawe College. But the school gives as well as receives.

Mr. Miller says some 800 teachers a year come to Robarts for training workshops that raise awareness about those with a hearing loss and/or learning disabilities. The Resource Services Program provides assistance to school boards and agencies in identifying and recommending suitable educational programs and/or equipment for exceptional pupils.

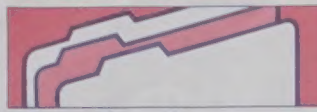
The school also operates pre-school and family services to parents who have children with a permanent hearing loss. And when students graduate, the school tries to ensure that living beyond the classroom walls will be as smooth a transition as possible. The school has mini-apartments where older students can live for short periods, are responsible for their own groceries and meals, and can get an idea, before graduating, of what it's like to live on their own.

"I guess what we mean to the community is that we're an example of what deafness and the deaf community is," Mr. Miller says. "We're proud to promote the successes of the deaf to them. If we can get the word out that these students are good citizens and capable of a great deal then we're doing our job!"



"Partnerships for Success — Partenaires dans le succès" is the theme of this year's Education Week. During the week of April 23-29 students, educators, parents and others are encouraged to take part in a variety of activities being held throughout the province. This year's theme focuses on partnerships with the community, and students are encouraged to pursue new ones that can be mutually beneficial to themselves, the school and the community at large.

Follow-up



Draft drug policy to be ready in the fall

A draft policy framework to guide school boards on their future drug education initiatives should be ready by the end of April, says the chair of a provincial drug advisory committee.

Karl Kinzinger, director of the North York Board of Education, says the framework is the next step toward implementing drug education policies for all school boards.

"The committee recognizes that the co-operation of the schools, the community, the police and parents is needed to solve this serious problem."

The committee is considering such drug education issues as what support services are needed, how to make best use of community resources and how to intervene and counsel students who use and/or sell drugs. Once the framework is drafted, members of the committee, who represent a wide variety of educators and other interested groups, will have their respective organizations review the proposals, he says.

The framework will then be presented later in the fall to Wally Beevor, Assistant

Deputy Minister, Learning Programs. The committee is expected to report to Education Minister Chris Ward by the end of the year.

Last fall, Mr. Ward announced the ministry's intention to make drug education mandatory in Ontario schools. The drug advisory committee was formed in January and met for the first time in February.

Mr. Kinzinger says committee members were busy reviewing and gathering drug information throughout February and March to ensure that the draft policy covered wide areas of concern.

The 31-member committee includes Ministry of Education officials, teachers' organizations, trustee and supervisory officers groups, the Addiction Research Foundation, the police, and parents associations.

The drug education policy is expected to be available to school boards by the spring of 1990, he says, and comprehensive drug education policy should be in place in the schools by September, 1991.

Although the framework will provide guidance and direction, each board will likely determine how the policy is implemented in their schools, he added.

Public opinion sought on religious education

Dr. Glenn Watson wants to know what you think of religious education in public elementary schools.

The former director of education for the Brant County Board of Education was appointed by Education Minister Chris Ward in January to conduct an inquiry into religious education. As part of the inquiry, Dr. Watson has begun to meet with a variety of interested educators and groups.

Letters have been forwarded to teacher and trustee groups, religious organizations and other interested parties to solicit input.

A questionnaire has been sent out to all public boards to ascertain the extent of religious education in the province's elementary schools.

The questionnaire asks, among other things, for information on how often religion is taught in the schools, at what time during the day, the materials used, and the number of students and teachers who have asked to be exempt from involvement in the subject. Those filling out the questionnaire are also asked for their opinions on religious education.

"There's such a wide variety of opinions on the topic," Dr. Watson says. "The views vary from one extreme to the other, but I firmly believe there's a lot of wisdom

out there and it's my job to tap that wisdom."

The need for a review is underlined by recent developments, including the creation of the Canadian Charter of Rights, its interpretation by the courts, and the passage last year of a resolution by the Legislature to consider for Ontario schools a multi-grade, multi-faith religious education curriculum.

In addition to reviewing existing policy, Dr. Watson's terms of reference include:

- identifying curriculum options that can respond to the multicultural and multi-faith nature of Ontario;
- identifying appropriate strategies to help prepare teachers to teach the subject; and
- recommending the adoption of an appropriate religious education policy.

Dr. Watson, who is to report to the minister by January 31, 1990, says he plans to consult extensively with as many Ontarians as possible.

"One of my challenges is to try to get input from that silent majority before any policy is recommended."

Written submissions should be sent to him by May 15. His office is at 1200 Bay St., 11th Floor, Toronto, Ont. M5R 2A5 or call (416) 963-3356.

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Stories for this issue written by Mark Kearney. Photos by John Easton and Mark Kearney. Artwork prepared by Rod Thompson.

School is a gas at Training Centre

by Mark Kearney

When you pull up to the Petrocan station on Industrial Avenue in Ottawa, nothing strikes you as abnormal at first.

The service attendant, decked out in the usual coveralls, is courteous and competent, perhaps a bit younger than usual. A car is in the garage for repairs, someone is sitting at a desk checking the books.



The Petrocan Service Station Training Centre has a portable classroom next door where students take an hour of classes each day.

But look closer. What looks to be a classroom portable sits beside the garage. And the sign on the window reads "Training Centre."

The young people here are not just pumping your gas they're going to school.

This gas station was modeled on a similar one in North York and is "a place for students to learn — not necessarily to learn how to work at a gas station," says manager Marc Vannier.

The school was set up in April 1987 by the Ottawa-Carleton Learning Foundation in co-operation with the four local school boards. The Foundation works with local boards and business groups, in this case Petrocan, to develop and fund innovative approaches to education.

"We're trying to strengthen the links between education and business and industry," says the Foundation's executive director Margo Rideout. "So far, we're very pleased. The feeling we've gotten from the students has been very positive."

Mr. Vannier says he oversees the co-operative education aspect of the gas station, but there are two teachers who



Although full service for customers is part of the job, as student Pat Cyr shows as he cleans the window of a car, the students are here to learn life skills that may help them with employment or schooling later on.

lead the class work. Students attending here tend to be former dropouts or those at risk of leaving school before finishing their education.

Students attend one hour of classes in

the portable and then work five hours at the service station for no pay except on Saturdays.

"The teachers are there to teach such things as basic auto mechanics, but the students are learning life skills, definitely skills," Mr. Vannier adds. "We treat them as employees. If they're sick or going to be late they're expected to call in just as they would at any job. It's just run like a regular gas station."

The two teachers closely supervise any mechanical work done, he says, and students can get bonuses for good attendance. There have been more than 100 students who have studied here, and many have returned to school while others have found jobs.

So what do the students think?

"I like it," says Sean Hebert, a graduate of the school who now works part-time there as an assistant manager. "It gives me valuable work experience."

Sean had quit school and worked for a year before coming to the training centre to get the last two credits of his Grade 12 diploma. He's now a full-time student at Algonquin College studying accounting.

"I didn't like the idea of going to school from nine till three just to get two more credits. But when I was working after I quit school, I realized I wasn't going to get anywhere without my diploma."

Under the program, students like Sean can attend the training centre five days a week for three months to get credits and work experience.

He says the program should prove valuable to his accounting studies because he's learned how to run a business, how to deal with customers and handle inventory control.

Pat Cyr, a new student at the centre, said he wasn't planning to quit school but was also not going to study hard either. A guidance counsellor suggested he come to the training centre where he's been enjoying the different style of learning it offers.

Feedback from the people who use the service station has been good, says Ms. Rideout, and many come back regularly. "I've talked with people who have gone there and who keep going back because they feel that in their own way they can help the students."



Sean Hebert, assistant manager at the service station, is a graduate of the Training Centre. He works at the station part-time while studying full-time at Algonquin College in Ottawa.

Sean agrees some people go out of their way to use the station because they know they're supporting students. "Students may be a little slower fixing cars than regular mechanics, but they give a little extra to make the people happy."

News Briefs



School reunion set for May

York Memorial Collegiate Institute is celebrating its 60th anniversary on May 6, 1989. For more information call 416-394-3000.

Sandford students win award

A Sir Sandford Fleming College student has won an essay contest in competition with university students across the United States. Don Chapman, 28, of Peterborough, a third-year student in Fleming's Convention Management program, won the Professional Convention Management Association Essay Contest.

Chapman received \$750 for his essay, "Education: The Future of the Meetings Industry". Chapman was the lone Canadian entrant in the contest, with 34 other entries from U.S. universities, including Harvard and Cornell.

Fleming is the first college in Canada to establish a Convention Management program, designed to turn out professionals in a rapidly growing industry.

A former Sir Sandford Fleming student Brian Snoddon of Sunderland won a national carpentry apprenticeship contest.

And finally, a team of seven Fleming students finished second among 17 col-

leges in the fifth annual Ontario Colleges' Marketing Competition. Lawrence College in Kingston finished first.

The competition consisted of eight events ranging from a marketing quiz to solving marketing and merchandising problems and conducting executive job interviews. The judges were representatives of such corporations as Canada Life, Canada Packers Inc., Financial Concept Group Inc., Foot Locker of Kinney Canada, Limestone Club, Royal Bank of Canada, Sears Canada Inc., The Bay and Xerox Canada.

Take the plunge in New Brunswick

Get your feet wet, and participate in the second Summer Institute for Teachers at the Huntsman Marine Science Centre, in St. Andrews, New Brunswick.

In this course teachers will experience, first hand, new marine science teaching ideas and methods for the classroom.

The HMSC is situated in one of North America's most dynamic environments with the highest tides and some of the largest whirlpools in the world.

Enrolment is limited to 20 participants and the deadline for registration is June 15, 1989. This course currently does not carry university credits.

Course fees (\$500.00) cover meals, accommodations, all field, vessel and laboratory supplies and equipment, and curriculum materials.

For more information on registration procedures and course description, please contact: James Steel, Public Education Co-ordinator, Huntsman Marine Science Centre, St. Andrews, New Brunswick, E0G 2X0, or phone (506) 529-8895.

Letters



Dear Editor

As an elementary school teacher, I enjoy scanning the issues of Education Ontario. It is a worthwhile publication.

In the October issue I noted an article entitled "Centennial College approves \$10.3 million expansion". What stood out were the references in the old British System of measurement. I still think that way too often, but since I do teach the metric system, Education Ontario should certainly use it exclusively in its excellent articles.

Keep up the good work, and I hope this constructive suggestion will be of some future help.

Bob Lister
Toronto, Ontario

Dear Editor

The October "Education Ontario" headline suggests the Ministry of Education is going to implement mandatory drug education for all schools in Ontario in 1988-90. Does this include independent schools? If not, the headline should read,

for future similar announcements, "for all publicly funded schools" or "all public schools" inasmuch as the separate system is a panel of the overall public system.

We believe these distinctions are important so that the Ministry is seen to be the Ministry of Education and not the Ministry of Public Schools.

Lyle McBurney
Executive Director
Ontario Association of Alternative and Independent Schools

Dear Editor

I've just finished reading Education Ontario, and was very impressed with the editorial and graphic quality of the publication.

I imagine you will be getting excellent response from your readership.

Best of luck.

Suzanne R. Cornforth
Director, External Communications
McMaster University, Hamilton

Guest Column



Schools win with Future Aces guide

by Ron Wideman

Editor's Note: Ron Wideman is an education officer in the Ministry of Education's Centre for Early Childhood and Elementary Education.

Values education has long been part of the public school curriculum in Ontario. It is included among the duties of the teacher in the *Education Act* and in the Thirteen Goals of Education. Parents and teachers agree that effective schools must work with families and community to contribute to the academic, personal and social development of students.

Increasing numbers of Ontario schools are finding that when values education is made a priority, clearly articulated positive changes occur in school climate and student behaviour.

Some Ontario school boards are actively supporting their schools in doing this. For example, in February, 1988, the Scarborough Board of Education adopted as policy a statement of the values for which its schools stand. Within the framework of the values which the Ministry of Education has identified as forming the foundation of school curriculum in Ontario, the Scarborough statement identifies five areas of emphasis — teaching students appreciation of learning, respect and caring for self, respect and caring for others, a sense of community and social responsibility. During the 1988-89 school year, eight schools were involved in a board-wide implementation project on values in the curriculum.

None of this is news to Herb Carnegie. He has been convinced for years that parents, schools, and community need to



Herb Carnegie,
Future Aces founder

work together to help young people develop positive values. During a 16-year hockey career, Mr. Carnegie played for a number of teams, including the Quebec Aces when they were Quebec senior champions. He has also been one of Canada's leading amateur golfers.

In 1955, Mr. Carnegie developed the Future Aces philosophy to help young

people aspire to good citizenship. Future Aces is an acronym standing for twelve goals — Attitude, Ability, Action, Advancement, Achievement, Co-operation, Courage, Confidence, Education, Example, Service and Sportsmanship.

Initially, Mr. Carnegie used the Future Aces philosophy as a basis for teaching at the Willowdale Future Aces Hockey School which he had founded. He was later asked to share the philosophy with some students in North York schools.

Since then, Mr. Carnegie has been bringing his message to many North York schools and has been referred to as the North York Board's ambassador of altruism. A number of North York public schools have adopted the Future Aces philosophy and used it as a basis for values education.

Elaine Lester, principal of Cummer Valley Middle School, reports that Cummer Valley parents see Future Aces as a positive force that has contributed to their children's well-being. "Staff discuss the Future Aces philosophy with our students and use it to assist them when the students encounter difficulties", says Ms. Lester. "It promotes values which can be embraced by all regardless of their age, sex, background, colour or religious beliefs."

Bruce Howell, principal of Lescon Public School, says it's important that the Future Aces philosophy be actively incorporated in school life. This year staff are dedicated to making the philosophy more understandable and meaningful to the youngsters at the school. The twelve Future Aces goals have been written down as a tangible code of conduct for use in the classrooms, the halls and on the playground.

For example, under *Service and Sportsmanship*, pupils are encouraged to: use good manners, show others how to do things, take initiative to keep halls and playground tidy, welcome people to the school, encourage others, and accept and play by the rules.

At Lescon, such specific behaviours are reinforced in student-presented "thoughts for the day" during announcements.

David Sindholt, principal at Lawrence Heights Middle School, suggests the following activities for incorporating Future Aces and helping students begin to "live" the philosophy:

- Post the Future Aces philosophy in every classroom, in the foyer, in the office, in the library, and anywhere else it could be referred to by staff when encouraging students;
- Select one of the twelve goals from the Future Aces philosophy as school or class goal of the week and broadcast it during announcements each day;
- Encourage students to share the news when they see another student being an ACE. Involve them in setting achieve-

FUTURE ACES

A I will endeavour to develop a positive mental **Attitude** toward all people and toward my work.

I will endeavour to develop my talents and **Ability** in order that I may be helpful to society.

I will endeavour to use my talents and act upon my ability, for without **Action** I am limited.

I will endeavour, through a positive mental attitude, through my ability and through my actions, to **Advance** not only the values that are important to me, but also the values that are important to others.

I will endeavour to **Achieve** my goal by honest and sincere effort.

C I will endeavour to **Co-operate** and seek understanding with all people, regardless of colour, race or creed.

I will endeavour to act **Courageously**, standing for what is right and speaking out against what is wrong.

I will endeavour to be **Confident** without being arrogant.

E I will endeavour to acquire the best **Education** within my capability.

I will endeavour to set a good **Example** to others.

S I will endeavour to render **Service** to others.

I will endeavour to practice good **Sportsmanship** in all my decisions, recognizing fair play to all, not complaining about adverse situations, but accepting the good with the bad.

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Herb H. Carnegie: C.M.C.
Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal Recipient

able objectives, help them recognize their strengths in terms of the philosophy, and discuss how people can help others become ACES;

- Recognize students for their success in striving for the goals. Send letters home, post photographs, present certificates; and
- When students behave inappropriately, involve them in identifying which goal they were not achieving at the time. Ask them to identify the type of behaviour that would have been more consistent with that goal.

Parents can also help build student understanding of the Future Aces philosophy. Mr. Sindholt asks parents to:

- post the philosophy prominently where all members of the family will see it regularly;
- refer to it to reinforce positive behaviours and to recognize successes and improvements;
- hold family meetings to discuss the meaning of the twelve goals. Set reasonable objectives for the coming week and review successes of the previous week. Strive for growth rather than perfection; and
- share objectives and successes with teachers. Plan together how to achieve the best results using the common set of goals provided by the Future Aces philosophy.

Principals, teachers and parents in North York attest to the changes engendered by Future Aces. Bob Illingworth, a teacher at Flemington Public School, remembers that after two years students were trying seriously to "live" the Future Aces philosophy.

"Students appreciated how the twelve goals impacted on their daily lives," he says. "There was less swearing, less fighting, more co-operation and more consid-

eration of others."

Hugh McKeown, principal of Flemington until June, 1988, when he was seconded to the Ministry of Education, echoes Mr. Illingworth's view. "Flemington is regarded as a challenging inner-city school", says McKeown. "The introduction of Future Aces had a dramatic positive effect on student attitudes, work habits and discipline."

Elaine Lester remembers one parent who believed the emphasis on values development at Cummer Valley had changed her son's attitudes from negative to positive.

"Future Aces has made a very positive impact on our students," says Ms. Lester. "We are particularly delighted to see that the concept is growing. A number of elementary and two neighbouring secondary schools are now taking part in Future Aces."

Mr. Carnegie is also delighted by the positive impact his Future Aces philosophy has had in schools where it has been adopted. And in June, 1988, he was awarded the Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship by the Honourable Lincoln Alexander, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, for his lifetime work devoted to promoting racial tolerance and good citizenship among young people.

Ontario public schools are founded on values that, in general, Canadians hold and regard as essential to the well-being of their society. Values statements such as Future Aces, or the statement of the Scarborough Board of Education, transcend cultures and faiths, reinforce democratic rights and responsibilities and are important for building a society in which all Ontarians can maximize their own potential and fulfill their commitments.

For further information on Future Aces, contact Herb Carnegie at 11 Ravenscroft Circle, Willowdale, Ontario, M2K 1X1.